**Detroit Students Protest Inadequate Education, Absent Teachers**

DETROIT – According to students at Detroit Public Schools’ Frederick Douglass Academy, it’s become commonplace for large numbers of teachers to be absent at the same time, resulting in a teacher shortage. When that occurs, students are forced to spend their days lazing around the school gym or library instead of studying in the classroom.

And when students do have class, they say homework is seldom assigned. One student claims he received an A in geometry, even though he never took the final exam.

“It was by default, just for showing up. It wasn’t because he earned an A,” the boy’s mother told Freep.com.

While most kids might think it’s fun not having class or nightly homework, a group of Frederick Douglass Academy seniors knows the lack of a quality education is putting their futures in serious jeopardy.

Last week, nearly 50 high school seniors staged a public protest outside the school.

“We’ve been wronged and disrespected and lied to and cheated,” senior Tevin Hillsaid.

Hill explained he recently took a college math placement exam, only to realize how little he’s learned.

“I literally couldn’t answer a question on there,” Hill told the Detroit News. “Right now, I’m not going to be as successful as I should be because I haven’t been properly taught.”

The seniors are about to graduate, and know that any meaningful changes to the school will come too late to benefit them. But they’re not just thinking about themselves.

“I want the kids [that are] under me, I want them to be able to have the education that we were supposed to have that we didn’t get,” Davante Billups told myFOXDetroit.com.

Detroit Public Schools spokesperson Steve Wasko told the media that any teachers found abusing sick leave “will be reprimanded.”

Notice Wasko didn’t say those teachers would be fired. That’s because tenure makes firing bad teachers extremely difficult and expensive.

But is there any doubt the Frederick Douglass Academy is in need of a thorough “housecleaning”?

The local teachers union – the Detroit Federation of Teachers – won’t allow that, of course. The union will protect its members at all costs, and will claim education reformers only want to “privatize” public education and engage in “union-busting.”

What the unions refuse to understand is this isn’t about them. It’s about making sure that more students don’t end up like Tevin and Davante – cheated out of an education and unprepared for life.